

REMARKS

Claims 36 and 58 have been amended, and claims 77 and 78 have been newly added. Claims 36-58 and 60-78 are now pending in the application. Applicants respectfully request reexamination and reconsideration of the application in light of the amendments and the following remarks.

Initially, it should be noted that claims 36 and 58 were amended to correct typographical errors. Neither claim was amended for patentability reasons.

Claims 36-57 and 75 have been rejected under 35 USC 112, second paragraph. Applicants have amended independent claim 36 to correct typographical errors and assert that these amendments overcome the rejection.

Claims 58, 60-74, and 76 have been rejected as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,974,662 to Eldridge et al. ("Eldridge"). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

In rejecting claim 58 as anticipated, the PTO equates the probe card 502 of Eldridge with the semiconductor wafer comprising a plurality of dice described in claim 58. The probe card 502 of Eldridge, however, is described as a "conventional circuit board." Nothing in Eldridge teaches or suggests that the probe card 502 may be an unsingulated semiconductor device comprising a plurality of dice. Indeed, Eldridge describes element 508—not element 502—as a semiconductor wafer. Why and how would one replace the conventional circuit board 502 with a semiconductor wafer comprising unsingulated dice? Thus, independent claim 58 and its dependent claims, including claims 60-74 and 76, patentably distinguish over Eldridge.

Claims 36, 39-57, and 75 have been rejected as obvious in view of Eldridge and U.S. Patent No. 4,820,976 to Brown ("Brown"). In addition, dependent claims 37, 38, and 60 were rejected as obvious in view of Eldridge and U.S. Patent No. 6,184,053, and dependent claims 49 and 50 were rejected as obvious in view of Eldridge and U.S. Patent No. 6,064,213). Claims 42 and 63 have been rejected as obvious in view of Eldridge and Brozowski. Applicant respectfully traverses these rejections.

In rejecting independent claim 36, the PTO equates the semiconductor wafer under test 508 in Eldridge with the contactor of claim 36. The PTO further states that it would be obvious to replace the semiconductor wafer 508 of Eldridge with the wires 28 and flexible film 20 of Brown. What motivation, however, exists for replacing element 508 in Eldridge with wires 28 and flexible film 20 of Brown? Eldridge describes element 508 as a semiconductor wafer being

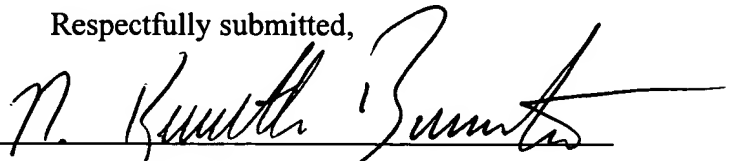
tested, and Eldridge describes the purpose of the probe card assembly 500 as to test the semiconductor wafer 508. Why would one replace the semiconductor wafer 508 with the wires 28 and flexible film 20 of Brown? Note that, because Eldridge's elements 540, 544, 506, 504, 534, 502, 530, and 532 are clamped together, replacing Eldridge's semiconductor wafer 508 with the wires 28 and flexible film 20 of Brown would not affect electrical contact or heat transfer between Eldridge's probe card 502 and interposer 504. Moreover, what would be tested in Eldridge if the semiconductor wafer 508 were replaced with the wires 28 and flexible film 20 of Brown? Indeed, replacing Eldridge's semiconductor wafer 508 with Brown's wires 28 and flexible film 20 would destroy the very purpose of Eldridge's probe card assembly 500, which is to test the semiconductor wafer 508. Therefore, the combination of Eldridge and Brown does not render claim 36 or its dependent claims, including claims 39-57, and 75, obvious. Likewise, no combination with any of the other cited references would render these claims unpatentable.

In view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully submit that the instant application is in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes that a discussion with Applicants' attorney would be helpful, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at (925) 456-3915.

Although Applicants believe that all required extensions of time and fees have been requested and provided for, Applicants petition the Commissioner for any extension of time deemed necessary for acceptance of this paper, and Applicants authorize the Commissioner to charge any fee (including the fee for any necessary extension of time) deemed necessary for acceptance of this paper to Deposit Account No. 50-0285 (order no. P70-US).

Date: May 5, 2003

Respectfully submitted,



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